

ABSTRACT

On a main line (2), when an empty space (cutting-out space) equal to or greater than a predetermined length is detected between lots of articles (1) or between articles (1) being conveyed, this detected empty space is reserved for an article arrival line (3) on which articles (1) are stored. When this empty space approaches a junction with the article arrival line (3) for which the empty space is reserved, articles (1) corresponding to the length of the reserved empty space are cut out from this article arrival line (3) to the main line (2). This method allows it to reduce empty spaces in which articles (1) are not conveyed on the main line (2), increase the joining efficiency, reduce the frequency of storage of articles (1) on the article arrival line (3), and reduce the waiting time for loading articles (1) to the article arrival line (3), thereby increasing the efficiency of the loading of articles (1).